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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/760,062 | 01/12/2001 | Christopher M. Connors | M-9722 US | 2598 |
| 33438 | 7590 | 11/03/2004 | EXAMINER | |
| HAMILTON & TERRILE, LLP P.O. BOX 203518 AUSTIN, TX 78720 | | | FADOK, MARK A | |
| | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | 3625 | |

DATE MAILED: 11/03/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

4-

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/760,062

Applicant(s)

CONNORS ET AL.

Examiner

Mark Fadok

Art Unit

3625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 August 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7,9-14,16-21 and 23-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7,9-14,16-21 and 23-39 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

The examiner is in receipt of applicant's response to office action mailed 3/3/2004, which was received 8/9/2004. Acknowledgement is made to the cancellation of claims 1,8,15 and 22, the amendment to claims 2-7,9-14,16-21 and 23-28 along with the addition of claims 29-39, leaving claims 2-7,9-14,16-21 and 23-39 as pending in the instant application. The amendment has been carefully reviewed and it was noted that the amendment caused new inventions to be added to the invention as originally presented, therefore a restriction requirement provided below is deemed appropriate.

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 2-7,9-14,16-21,23-28,29-34, drawn to method, system and computer program product for comparing product utilizing a series of computers, classified in class 705, subclass 27.
- II. Claim 35 and 36, drawn to means for comparing products, classified in class 705, subclass 27.
- III. Claims 37-39, drawn to a system to compare multiple product configurations, classified in class 705, subclass 27.

Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such

as "means for" which may include processes done by hand that are found in the specification. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter; restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Inventions I and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as communicating with a web site. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Group IA – 2-7,9-14,16-21,23-28,29,31 and 33

Group IB – 29-30,31-32,33 and 34

Group IIIA – 37 and 39

Group IIIB – 37 and 38

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, 29,31 and 33 are generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Mark Fadok** whose telephone number is **(703) 605-4252**. The examiner can normally be reached Monday thru Thursday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **Wynn Coggins** can be reached on **(703) 308-1344**.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **(703) 308-1113**.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Va. 22313-1450

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9306 [Official communications; including
After Final communications labeled
"Box AF"]

(703) 746-7206 [Informal/Draft communications, labeled
"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"]

Art Unit: 3625

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 7th floor receptionist.



Mark Fadok

Patent Examiner